



TOWER OF BABEL

PART THREE
OF FOUR

JLA

45
SEP 00

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

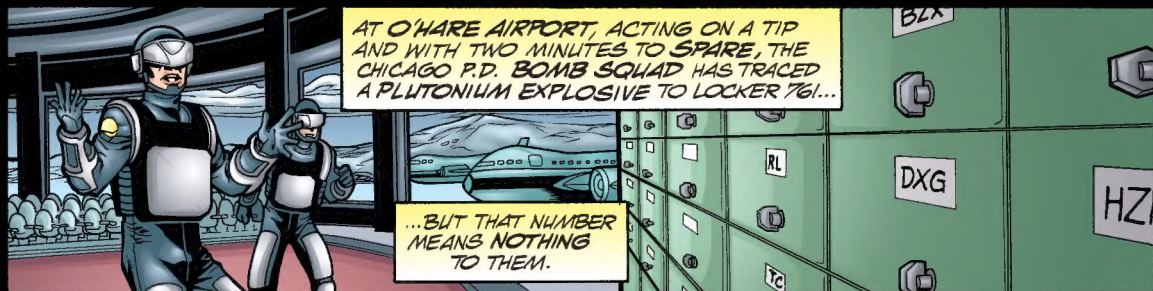
WAID
PORTER
GERACI

JXRB!
FNYBTL H
MVXP!!

RLECO KXP!
TMUQ IKS N
BWZLEH?

FLEN DM XRP!
GBBM OSNRZ LV
KMDOQ!

PORTER-GERACI



AT O'HARE AIRPORT, ACTING ON A TIP AND WITH TWO MINUTES TO SPARE, THE CHICAGO P.D. BOMB SQUAD HAS TRACED A PLUTONIUM EXPLOSIVE TO LOCKER 761...

...BUT THAT NUMBER MEANS NOTHING TO THEM.

ACROSS THE WORLD, A SOUTH KOREAN PLATOON ACCIDENTALLY WANDERS INTO NORTH COUNTRY THANKS TO WRITTEN ORDERS THAT ARE SUDDENLY SENSELESS.

THE RESULTANT MILITARY ACTION WILL COST HUNDREDS, PERHAPS THOUSANDS, OF LIVES.

GLOBAL ECOTERRORIST RA'S AL GHUL HAS THROWN THE EARTH INTO TURMOIL WITH HIS MODERN-DAY TOWER OF BABEL. ITS ULTRASONIC TRANSMISSIONS BLANKET THE GLOBE, SCRAMBLING THE LANGUAGE CENTERS OF THE HUMAN BRAIN.

WORLDWIDE, THE WRITTEN WORD IS NOW INCOMPREHENSIBLE--AND THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET WORSE.

MUCH WORSE.

THE JLAERS ARE POWERLESS TO HELP. ONE BY ONE, THEY'VE BEEN PREEMPTED--CRIPPLED BY RA'S LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS.

AQUAMAN--MADE PHOBIC OF THE WATER HE NEEDS TO LIVE.

FLASH--PARALYZED BY LIGHTSPEED EPILEPSY.

GREEN LANTERN--BLINDED.

EACH AND EVERY LEAGUER AT THE MERCY OF THE MAN WHO DESIGNED THE TRAPS SET FOR THEM:



BATMAN.

SUPERMAN!
AQUAMAN! I
DID THIS TO
YOU! LISTEN
TO ME!

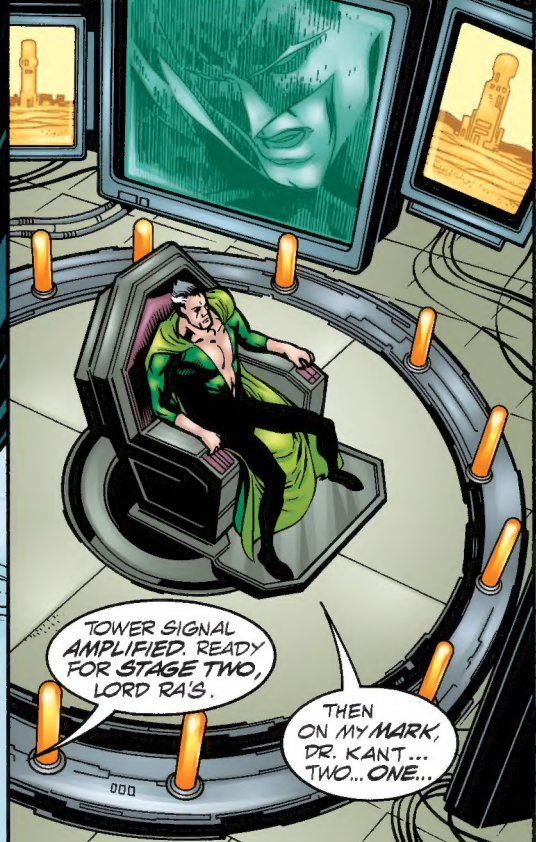
IT'S RA'S
AL GHUL-- HE'S
RAIDED MY
SECRET FILES
AND PROTOCOLS!
YOU'RE ALL IN
HORRIBLE
DANGER--

--BUT
I CAN
GET YOU
OUT!



ALL
OPERATIVES
ACTIVATE
NULLIFIERS.

KLIK



TOWER SIGNAL
AMPLIFIED, READY
FOR STAGE TWO,
LORD RA'S.

THEN
ON MY MARK,
DR. KANT...
TWO... ONE...



LISTEN
CAREFULLY!
HERE'S WHAT
TO DO! YOU'LL
HAVE TO--



...ZERO.

TOK

YOU'LL HAVE
TO ARUH NOKKA
VBL--

BATMAN?
BATMAN, YOU'RE
SPEAKING NONSENSE!
DO YOU READ ME?
I SAID--

--A-1PQ
K7Q'7L
1L747575
377477!

117777
71X77!

7777
E7777!

777777!

WHAT?
AQUAMAN, I CAN'T
UNDERSTAND
YOU! I--

NO.
NO.

LANGUAGE.

HE'S STOLEN
LANGUAGE...!

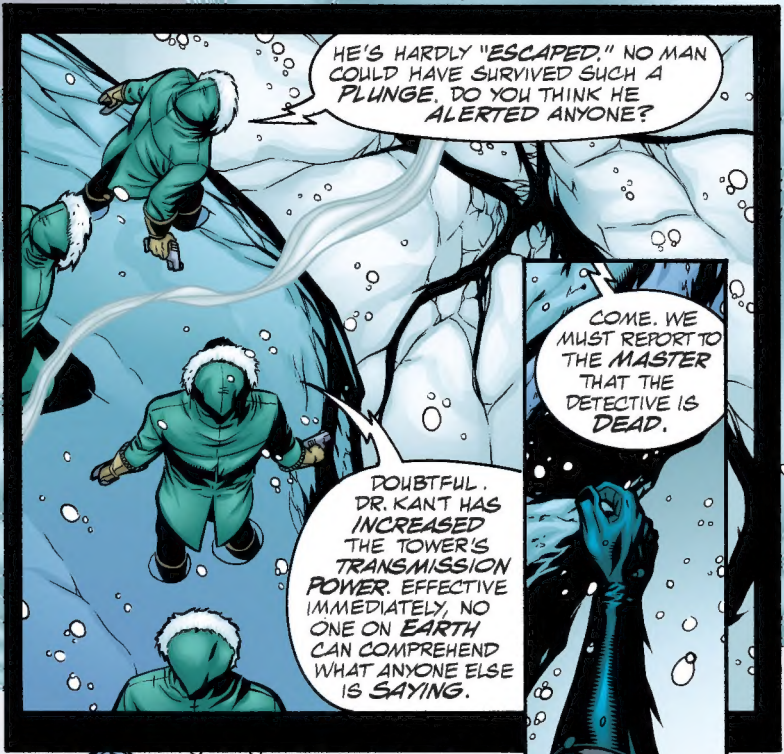
TOWER OF BABEL PART 3

PROTECTED BY THE COLD

MARK WAID-story HOWARD PORTER-pencils DREW GERACI-inks
KEN LOPEZ-letters JOHN KALISZ-colors HEROIC AGE-separations
TONY BEDARD-associate editor DAN RASPLER-editor
Special thanks to ZANDER CANNON



STOP HIM! DO NOT LET HIM ESCAPE!



HE'S HARDLY "ESCAPED." NO MAN COULD HAVE SURVIVED SUCH A PLUNGE. DO YOU THINK HE ALERTED ANYONE?



COME. WE MUST REPORT TO THE MASTER THAT THE DETECTIVE IS DEAD.

DOUBTFUL. DR. KANT HAS INCREASED THE TOWER'S TRANSMISSION POWER. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, NO ONE ON EARTH CAN COMPREHEND WHAT ANYONE ELSE IS SAYING.

JLA HEADQUARTERS.



SUPER...MAN...HANG ON. ACTIVATING TELE...

...TELEPORTER...

BELAY THOSE ORDERS, CAP'N HOOK...

I'LL REEL 'EM IN.

MINUTES LATER, AQUAMAN
AWAKENS BAFFLED... BUT
ALIVE, EVEN RENEWED.

HE'S NOT SURE WHERE HE
IS. ALL THAT HIS SENSES
PERCEIVE IS AN ARID,
ODDLY COMFORTING
DESERT.

IT'S A TELEPATHIC DELUSION.

WE GOT TO ARTHUR
JUST IN TIME. I'VE MADE
HIM UNWARE HE'S BREATHING
PRECIOUS WATER.

GO
THINNER.

THINNER.
AND TO THE
LEFT. A BIT
FURTHER...

...GENTLY...
THERE IT IS.
JUST ABOVE HER
OCCIPITAL
LOBE.

WITHDRAW.

EEEW.
EEEW.
EEEW.

UNNNNNNN

LIKE PUTTING
YOU TOGETHER
FROM JIGSAW
PIECES WAS
A PLEASANT
EXPERIENCE.

SUPERMAN,
HOW'S
WALLY?

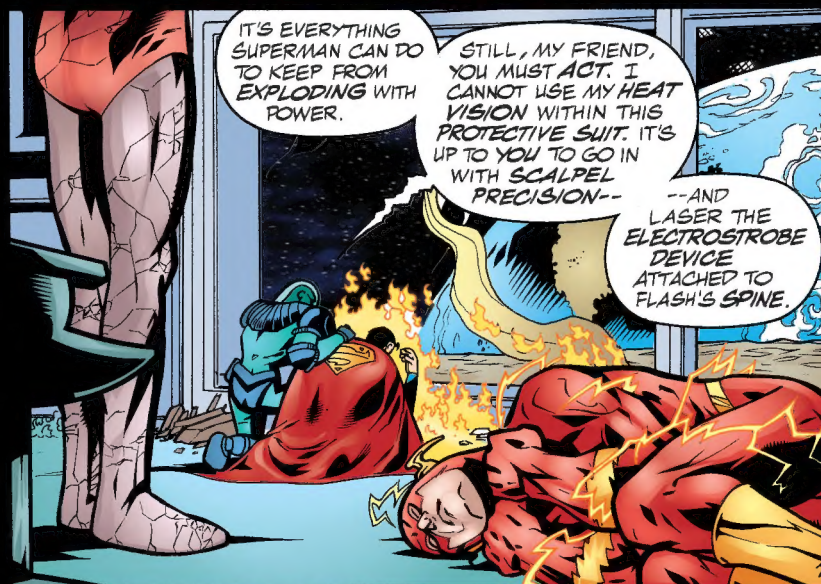


SUPERMAN?

HE CAN HEAR YOU, KYLE. IN FACT, RIGHT NOW, HE CAN HEAR A GRASSHOPPER'S HEARTBEAT IN BEIJING.

KZAAK

THE MUTATING EFFECTS OF BATMAN'S RED KRYPTONITE HAVE TURNED HIS SKIN TRANSPARENT. CONSEQUENTLY, THE SOLAR ENERGY THAT POWERS HIM BLAZES DIRECTLY--AND EXCRUCIATINGLY--INTO HIS ORGANS AND MUSCLES.



IT'S EVERYTHING SUPERMAN CAN DO TO KEEP FROM EXPLODING WITH POWER.

STILL, MY FRIEND, YOU MUST ACT. I CANNOT USE MY HEAT VISION WITHIN THIS PROTECTIVE SUIT. IT'S UP TO YOU TO GO IN WITH SCALPEL PRECISION--

--AND LASER THE ELECTROSTROBE DEVICE ATTACHED TO FLASH'S SPINE.



EASY... EASY...



GOD. OH, GOD... YOU COULDN'T IMAGINE THE PAIN. THERE WERE WHOLE DAYS I PRAYED JUST TO DIE.

J'ONN...JUST HOW LONG WAS I OUT?

... TWENTY-TWO MINUTES.



OH, GOD...

... SO THE IMPLANT PUT YOU IN AN ENDLESS VR BATTLE. THE ASSASSINS WERE BANKING ON YOUR HEART GIVING OUT EVENTUALLY. YOU OKAY?

WEAK... BUT I'M MORE CONCERNED ABOUT YOU, KYLE.

WHY? BECAUSE I'M BLIND? HEY... WHAT'S A PAIR OF EYES TO A GRAPHIC ARTIST, ANYWAY?

BESIDES, WE CAN FIX THIS. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS BE SMARTER THAN BATMAN, RIGHT?

NO. YOU JUST HAVE TO DO WHAT HE WON'T... AND THAT'S LISTEN TO OTHERS.

YOU SAID YOU WOKE UP THIS WAY--BUT YOU ONCE TOLD US YOU NEVER SLEEP WEARING THE RING FOR FEAR YOUR NIGHTMARES MIGHT ACTIVATE IT.

I...I HADN'T STOPPED TO THINK. YOU'RE RIGHT. THE ASSASSINS SLIPPED IT ON ME WHILE I SLEPT...? BUT WHY?

MY MINDSCAN INDICATES A POST-HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION WHISPERED DURING REM.

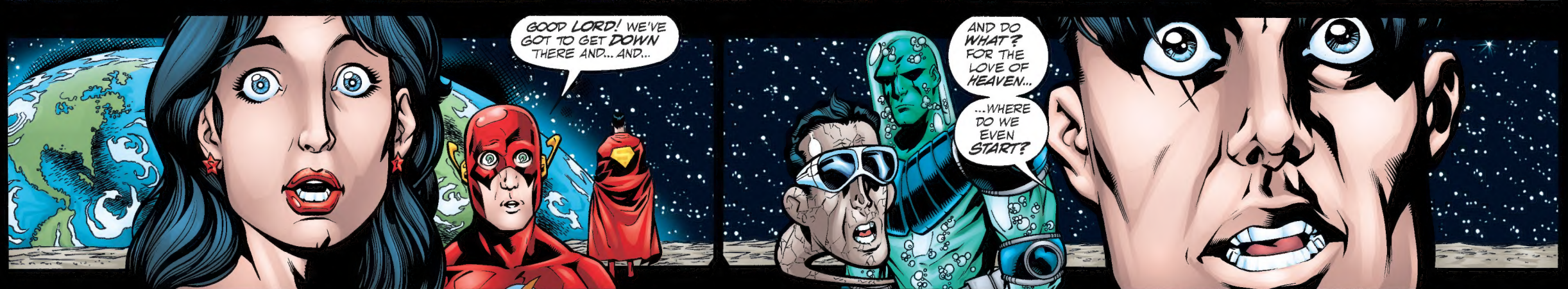
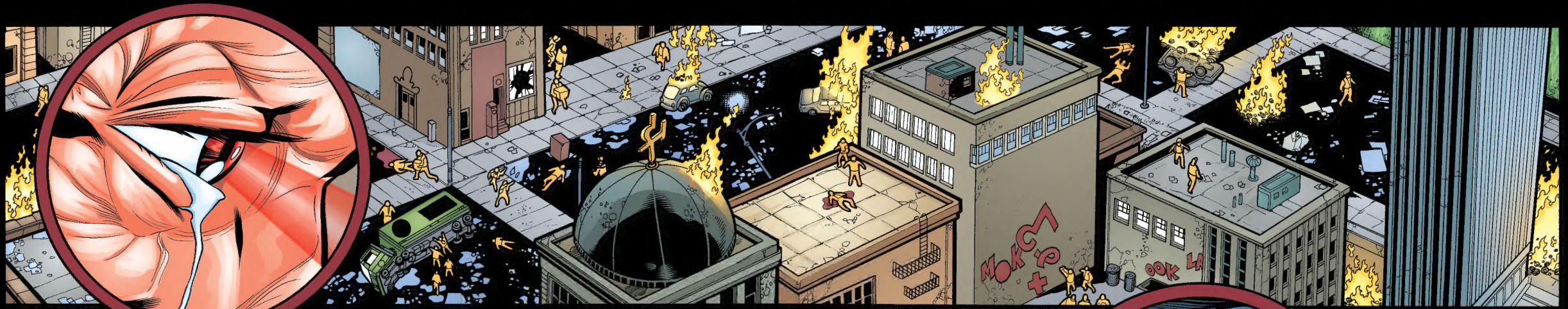
BATMAN'S AT HIS BEST PLAYING WITH MINDS, KYLE. SINCE THIS WAS APPARENTLY HIS NOTION, I THINK YOU WERE TOLD YOU WERE BLIND...

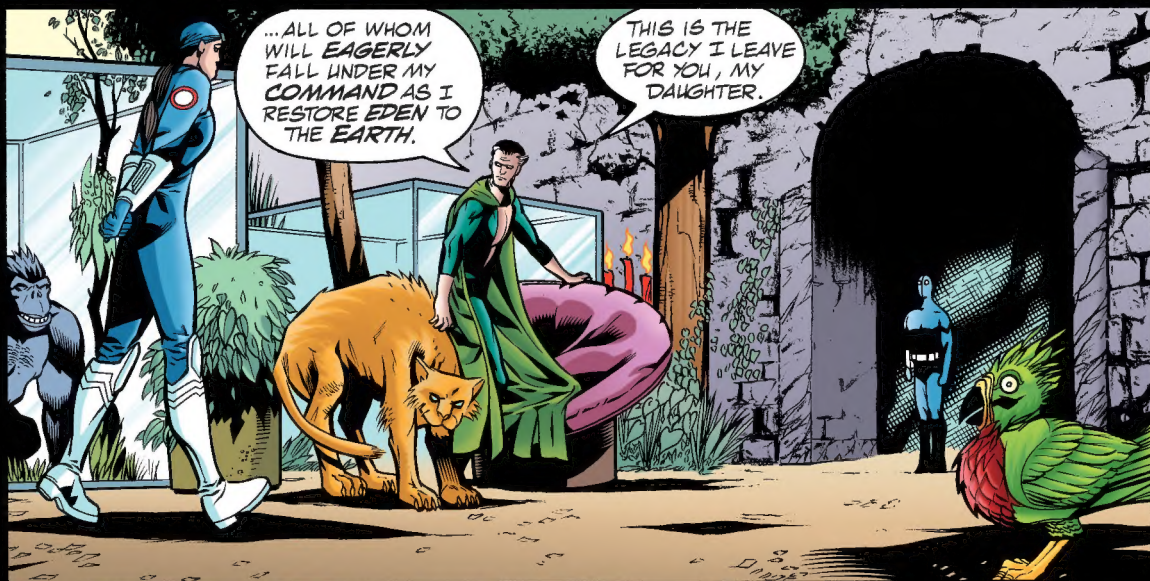
J'ONN, IT'S WORKING!

EVERYTHING'S COMING INTO FOCUS! I CAN SEE...

...AND THE RING, BECAUSE IT'S POWERED BY YOUR WILL, MAKES IT SO. TELL YOURSELF DIFFERENTLY... AND LOOK AGAIN.

... CAN SEE...







AND YOU HAVE HIS BODY?

N-NO, MISTRESS...



THEN HE IS NOT DEAD, AND YOU WILL BE PUNISHED FOR ANNOUNCING OTHERWISE.

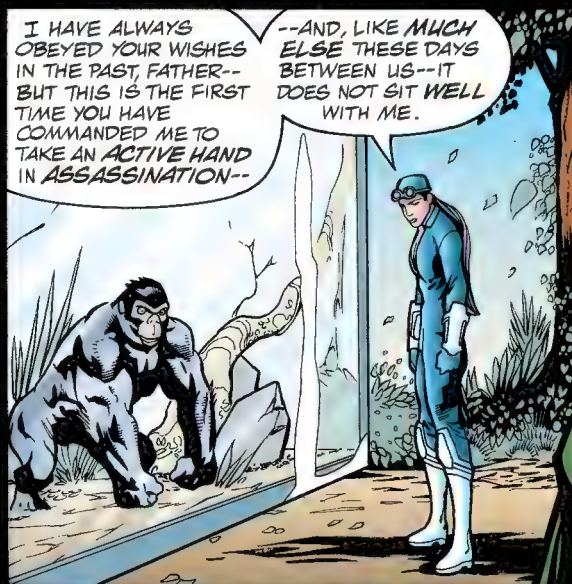
SMACK



AND AS FOR YOU--

SINCE YOU ORDERED ME TO CORRUPT AND BETRAY MY BELOVED'S PLANS AND INTENTIONS.

DAUGHTER! SINCE WHEN DO YOU SPEAK TO ME IN THAT TONE?



I HAVE ALWAYS OBEYED YOUR WISHES IN THE PAST, FATHER-- BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU HAVE COMMANDED ME TO TAKE AN ACTIVE HAND IN ASSASSINATION--

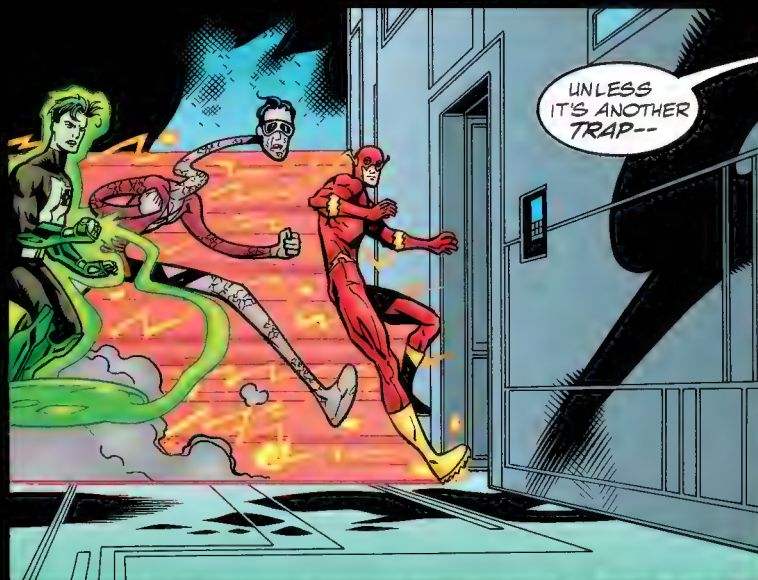
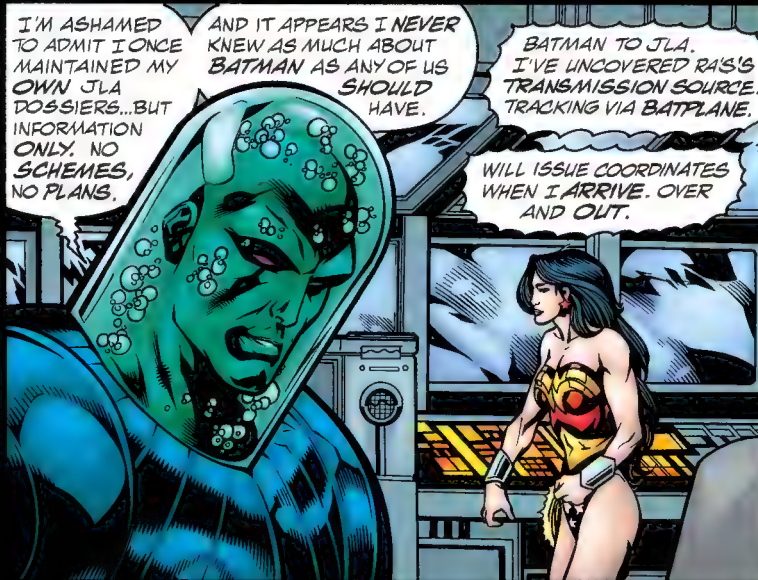
--AND, LIKE MUCH ELSE THESE DAYS BETWEEN US--IT DOES NOT SIT WELL WITH ME.

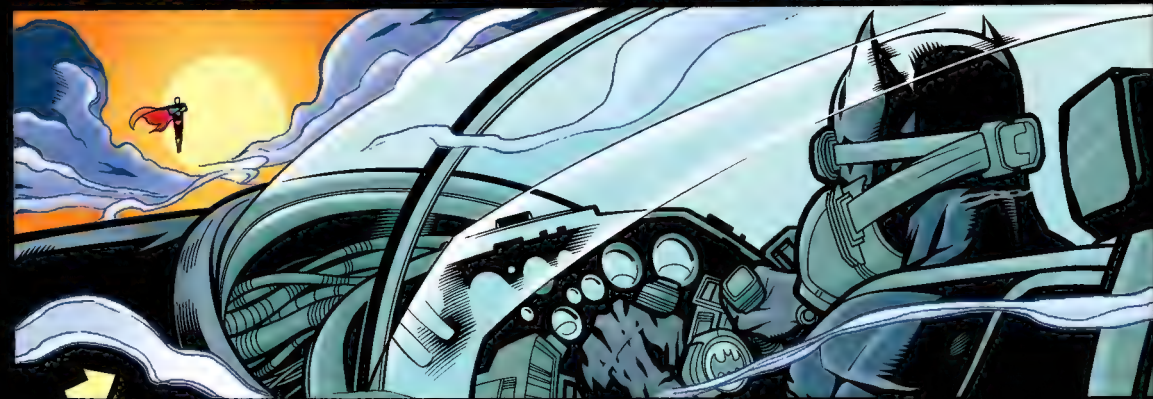
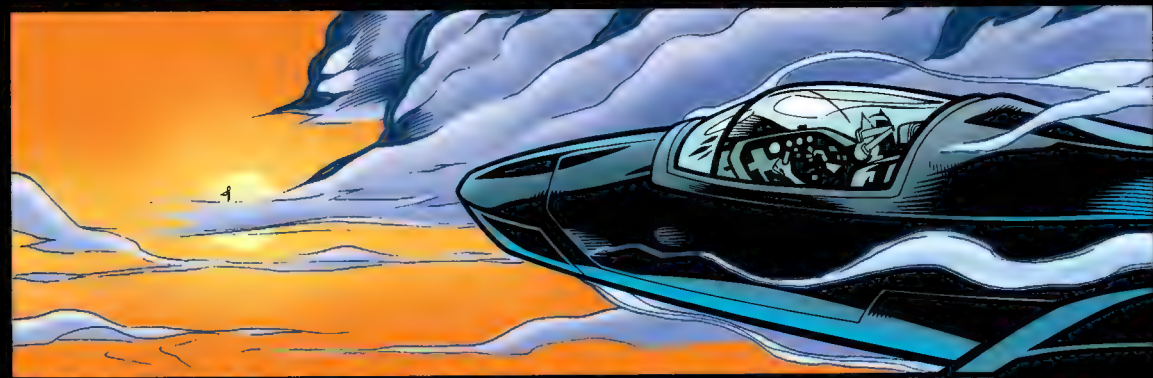
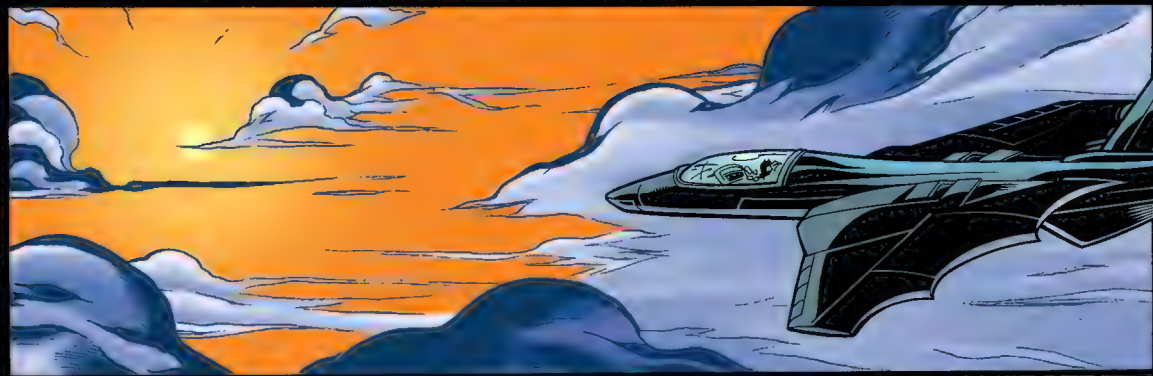
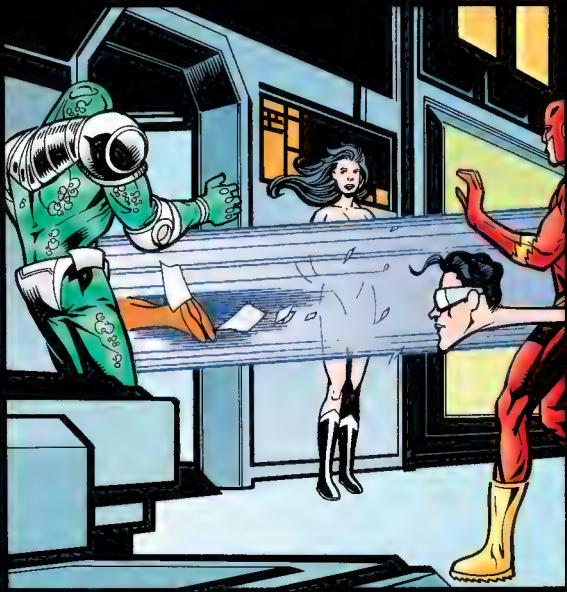


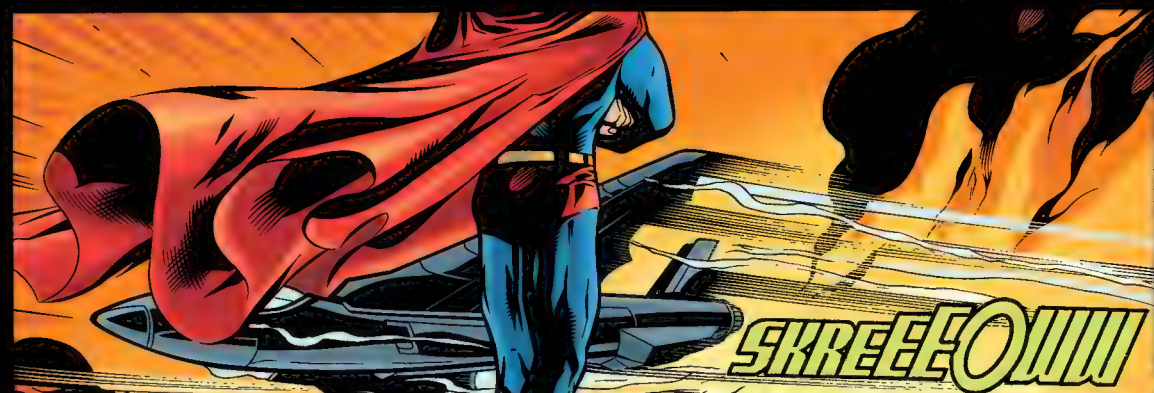
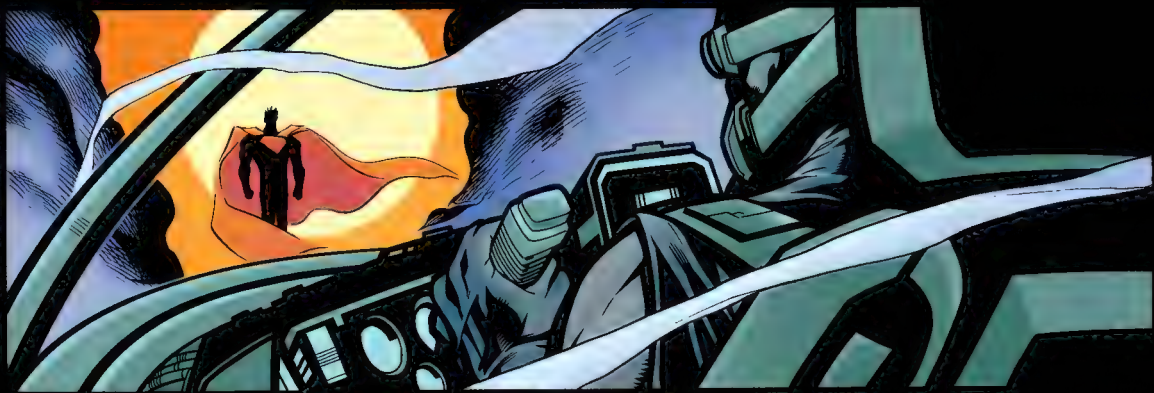
I SEE. WE WILL DISCUSS THIS LATER... IN PRIVATE.

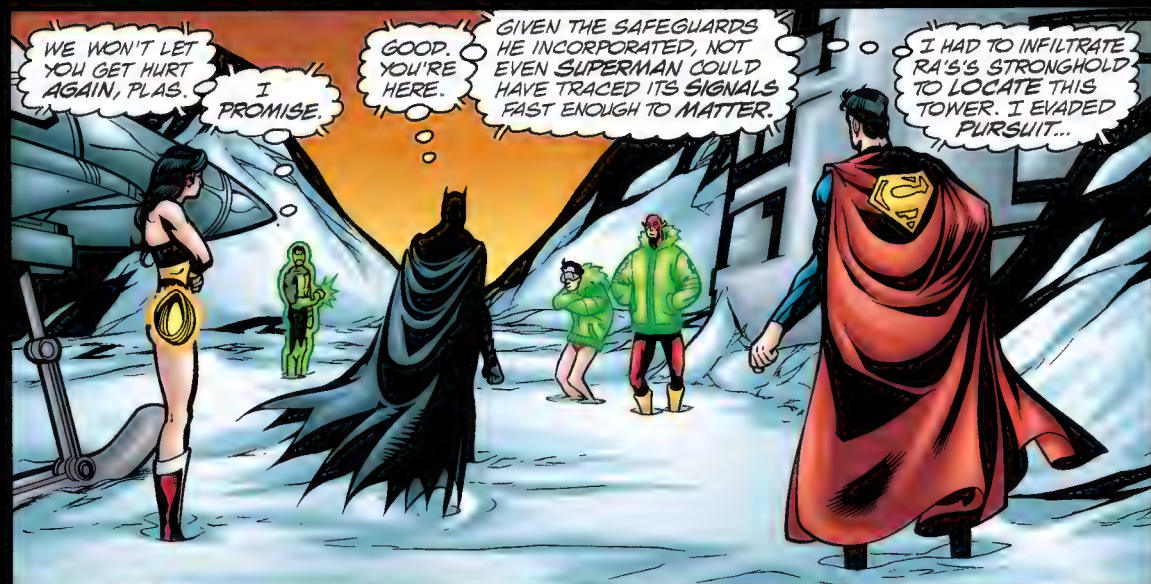
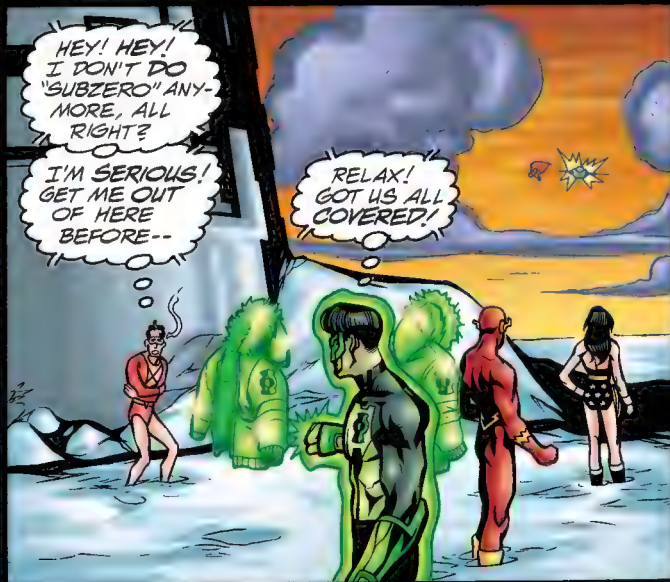
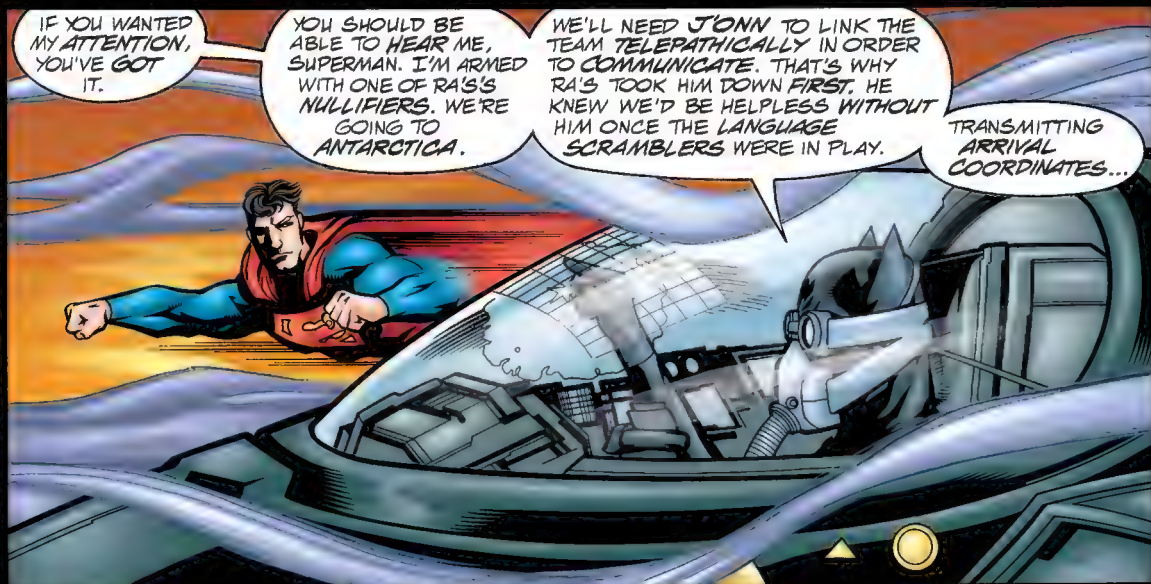
YOU HAVE MY SOLDIERS SEARCH THE ENTIRE MOUNTAINSIDE UNTIL THE DETECTIVE IS RECOVERED. HE COULD BE ANYWHERE.









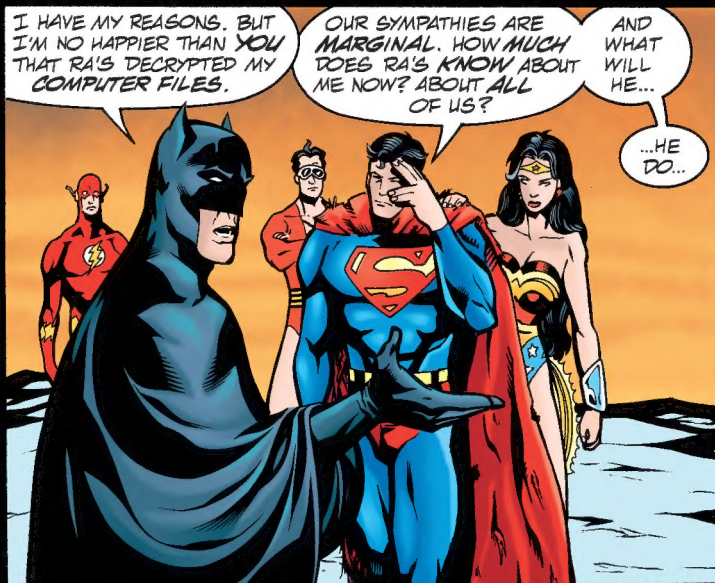


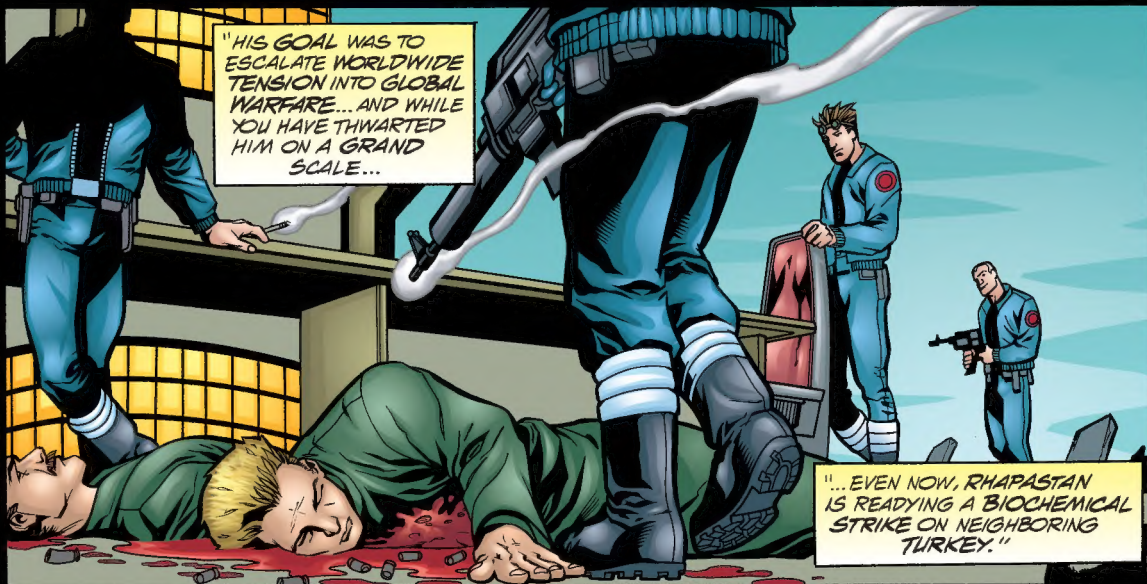












"HIS GOAL WAS TO ESCALATE WORLDWIDE TENSION INTO GLOBAL WARFARE... AND WHILE YOU HAVE THWARTED HIM ON A GRAND SCALE...

"...EVEN NOW, RHAPASTAN IS READYING A BIOCHEMICAL STRIKE ON NEIGHBORING TURKEY."



AND WHERE IT STOPS, NOBODY KNOWS. GIVEN THE TURMOIL WE'VE JUST CLAPPED, STARTING A WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS LIKE THROWING GASOLINE ON A BARBECUE.

THIS MAY BE ALL RA'S NEEDS. NOBODY'S THINKING STRAIGHT RIGHT NOW. ONE ITCHY BUTTON FINGER, AND HELLO NUCLEAR WINTER.

UNLESS WE'RE BEING PLAYED AGAIN. ISN'T "AL GHUL" ARABIC FOR "BIG FAT LIAR"?

PLUS, WHY ARE WE LISTENING TO THE BOSS'S DAUGHTER?



BECAUSE THIS TIME I HAVE BEEN USED CALLOUSLY BY HIM. BECAUSE I HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF BEING A PAWN IN MY FATHER'S ENDLESS SCHEMES.

THIS IS NO FALSEHOOD. IN ORDER TO FIND FATHER'S BIOTERRORISTS, YOU MUST LISTEN TO ME CAREFULLY.



THEY CAN BE FOUND IN A HIDDEN BUNKER IN **BLAM!**

AAAAH!

TALIA?
TALIA!



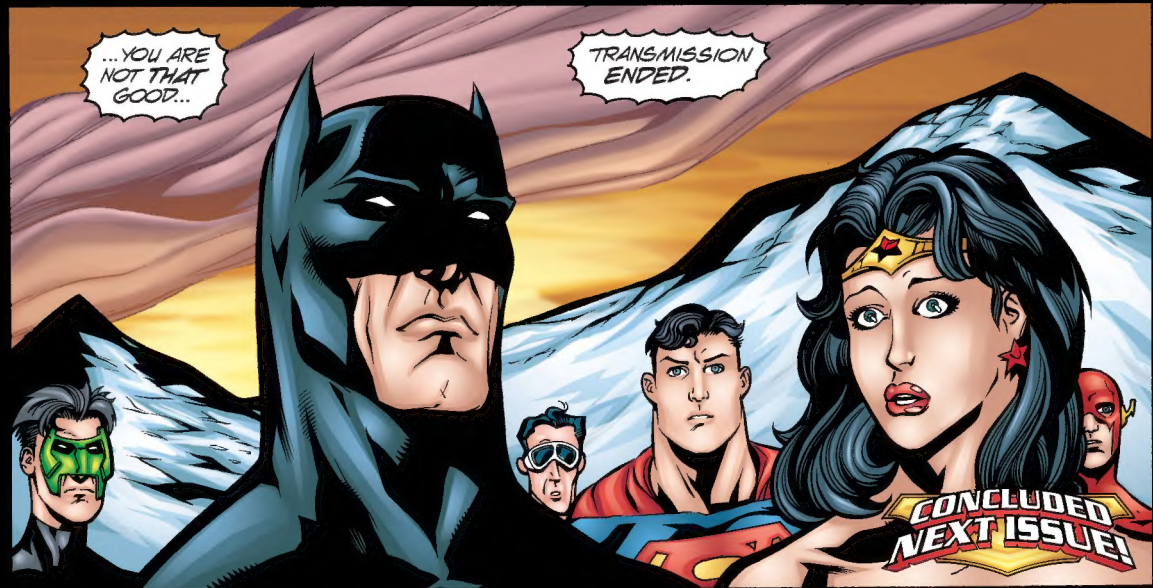
SHE HAS ALREADY SAID TOO MUCH, DETECTIVE.



NOW SHE MUST PAY FOR HER ACT OF TREASON... MEANING THAT, WHILE I AM CURRYING FAVOR WITH MY MASTER...

...YOU WILL BE ON A FUTILE SEARCH FOR A MICROSCOPIC WEAPON INVISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE.

AND WHILE YOU ARE GOOD...



...YOU ARE NOT THAT GOOD...

TRANSMISSION ENDED.

**CONCLUDED
NEXT ISSUE!**

“ [A] comic legend.”

– ROLLING STONE

GRANT MORRISON

“[Grant Morrison is] comics’s high shaman.”

– WASHINGTON POST

“[Grant Morrison] is probably my favorite writer. That guy has more ideas in his pinky than most people do in a lifetime.”

– GERARD WAY

from MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE

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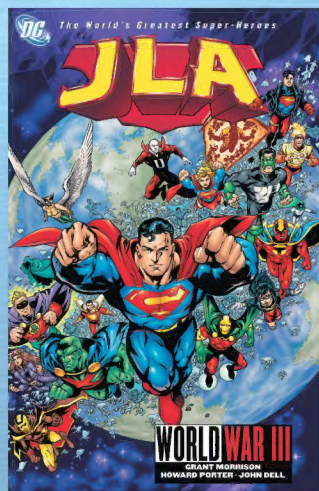
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